

One point alone seems decisive of this. Ney found under him in command, as General of Division, Bourmont, an officer of well-known Royalist opinions, who had at one time served with the Vendean insurgents, and who afterwards deserted Napoleon just before Waterloo, although he had entreated to be employed in the campaign. Not only did Ney leave Bourmont in command, but, requiring another Divisional-General, instead of selecting a Bonapartist, he urged Lecourbe to leave his retirement and join him. Now, though Lecourbe was a distinguished General, specially famed for mountain warfare — witness his services in 1799 among the Alps above Lucerne — he had been long left unemployed by Napoleon on account of his strong Republican opinions and his sympathy with Moreau. These two Generals, Bourmont and Lecourbe, the two arms of Ney as commander, through whom alone he could communicate with the troops, he not only kept with him, but consulted to the last, before he declared for Napoleon. This would have been too dangerous a thing for a tricky politician to have attempted as a blind, but Ney was well known to be only too frank and impulsive. Had the Due de Berry gone with him, had Ney carried with him such a gage of the intention of the Bourbons to defend their throne, it is probable that he would have behaved like Macdonald; and it is certain that he would have had no better success. The Bonapartists themselves dreaded what they called the wrong-headedness of Ney. It was, however, thought better to keep the Due de Berry in safety.

Ney found himself put forward singly, as it were, to oppose the man whom all France was joining; he found, as did every officer sent on a similar mission, that the soldiers were simply waiting to meet Napoleon; and while the Princes sought security, while the soldiers plotted against their leaders, came the calls of the Emperor in the old trumpet tone. The eagle was to fly — nay, it was flying from tower to tower, and victory was advancing with a rush. Was Ney to be

the one man to shoot down his old leader ? could he, as he asked, stop the sea with his hands ? On his trial his -sub-ordinate, Bourmontj who had by that time shown his devo-